

OLL #

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Chrono

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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file SASC

Dear Colleague:

Those of us who were privileged to serve with Scoop Jackson as Colleagues were only part of a broader bipartisan audience nationally who came to respect and rely upon his extraordinary grasp of national security and foreign policy matters. Accordingly, Scoop's death was an extraordinary loss to all of us in that broader audience and the countless others who unknowingly were the beneficiaries of the knowledge and wisdom he shared with us on the Floor of the Senate.

You will recall that just prior to his death Scoop focused his concern about the threat to vital American interests in the Western hemisphere by proposing a plan for Central America. For those of you who missed it, I have enclosed a brief article by Ben Wattenberg that relates the recommendations of the Kissinger Commission to the actions which Scoop saw as so necessary (Op Ed A23 Washington POST January 26, 1984). Wattenberg observes that in addition to "Marshall Plan"-like economic assistance, "Jackson felt that Central America, like Western Europe, needed a military 'shield' behind which to develop. Jackson knew that military power could not be bought on the cheap. He did not believe in shields made of paper or even tinfoil." I will not repeat more of Wattenberg's fine article, but instead urge that you take the brief amount of time required to give it careful reading.

I respectfully urge that you pay special attention to the words with which Scoop expressed his remarkably clear vision of the importance of American actions in Central America to a larger "world peace and the future of individual liberty." I hope that you will agree with Ben Wattenberg's conclusion that "all that remains to fulfill Scoop's idea is to sell it to a recalcitrant Congress." It is my hope that we will honor Scoop's memory by acting quickly upon the wise prescription that was one of his final and most important legacies to us and to the nation. Let us be not a recalcitrant Congress, but a responsible Congress.

Sincerely,



PETE WILSON

Enclosure

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Ben J. Wattenberg

More on Scoop Jackson And Central America

The Kissinger Commission report on Central America is dedicated to the late Sen. Henry Jackson.

Already President Reagan is referring to it as the "Jackson Plan."

Columnist Philip Geyelin—never previously known as a great supporter of Jackson's views on foreign policy—has written [op-ed, Jan. 20] that because the report calls for substantial military aid, it violates the spirit of what Jackson felt.

Perhaps it's time to set the record straight on Jackson's position on the Central American situation.

Jackson was not for a "Kissinger Plan." He was not for a "Reagan Plan." He was too unassuming to think of it as a "Jackson Plan."

He was for a "Marshall Plan."

He had something very specific in mind when he used that term back in April 1983 to surface his commission idea.

He knew, of course, that the Central America of the early 1980s was very different from the Western Europe of the late 1940s. But there were some commonalities that resonated with Jackson. Central America today, like Western Europe then, needs a massive amount of economic aid.

Roads, bridges, power, hospitals, public health—just to begin a long list. These things don't come about overnight, and they are not inexpensive. It is, in fact, impossible to make them happen while guerrillas are purposefully trying to destroy an economy.

Accordingly, Jackson felt that Central America, like Western Europe, needed a military "shield" behind which to develop. Jackson knew that military power could not be bought on the cheap. He did not believe in shields made of paper, or even of tinfoil. Geyelin imputes such a view to him, but it is contrary to the spirit of everything Jackson said about Central America or, for that matter, about the rest of the world.

Finally, Jackson was attracted to the Marshall Plan because of politics. The problem, then as now, was on the home front. Gen. George Marshall saw to it that an "independent" commission was formed to sell the bold, controversial

and expensive idea to a recalcitrant and timid Congress.

That commission was chaired by Secretary of War Henry Stimson. It included notable Americans: Dean Acheson, Mrs. Wendell Wilkie, labor leader David Dubinsky. They sold the idea. And it worked.

Where are we today?

There has been a commission. Like Stimson's, it included many distinguished Americans. Some key members are people in whom Jackson placed great trust. Lane Kirkland and Bob Strauss are heavy hitters from the Democratic "A Team," and both were longtime admirers of Jackson and his views. Jackson felt Richard Scammon knew how the world worked—at home and abroad. Kissinger and Jackson had some titanic policy struggles in earlier years, but recently were in general agreement and had great respect for each other.

There has been a commission report. It echoes Jackson's call. It asks for \$8 billion in economic aid during a five-year period. It talks approvingly of the administration's request for more funds for military aid—about \$400 million per year for the next two years. (Note that the economic aid far surpasses the military aid.)

Ryan Malarkey, who was Jackson's staff man on Central America, says the commission's proposal "is fully in keeping with what Sen. Jackson had in mind."

So, all that remains to fulfill Jackson's idea is to sell it to a recalcitrant Congress. In the course of doing that, it will be wise to remember some of Jackson's words. He had a broad vision.

"Think of what destabilization of the whole Central American isthmus, including Mexico, could mean to our ability to meet our commitments. . . ." Jackson said. "Confronting hostile neighbors . . . any U.S. government would be faced with demands to bring our troops home from Europe and reduce our commitments in the Pacific. . . . The manner in which we meet the challenges in Central America affects profoundly our abilities to safeguard world peace and the future of individual liberty."

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